

IOWA OUTDOORS

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
www.iowadnr.gov

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STATE PARKS TO DEBUT NEW FEATURES

DES MOINES – The campground at Black Hawk State Park will be open for the Memorial Day holiday weekend and may be a prime target for campers looking for a last minute place to go. The DNR did not accept reservations at Black Hawk while the campground improvements were underway.

The campground now offers an increased size of the individual campsites and additional electrical sites. The campground was upgraded from 68 electrical campsites to 89 sites, and all will offer 50 amp service. Of those 89 sites, 11 will be pull through and have individual water hydrants with the electrical service.

The number of overall campsites has been reduced from 176 to 128, offering a more spacious feel to the campground. The additional room between campsites will allow for larger vehicles. All 89 electrical pad and living space will have crushed stone surface.

The Black Hawk project also included a new campground water lines, a new fire ring at each campsite, replaced the existing water hydrants and is added two new drinking water fountains at the shower building.

Campers at Lake Macbride and Brushy Creek can enjoy new playground equipment that was installed this spring. Each playground has more than \$30,000 of new equipment, partially funded by local fund drives.

Campers at Backbone State Park may notice restoration work has begun on of the historic fish hatchery wall. This 660 foot stone wall was originally built in 1927, and served as flood protection for the trout ponds.

Other projects will be nearly completed by the July 4 holiday, including new water lines and expanded campground electrical project at Prairie Rose State Park, and a new water system at Wilson Island State Park. The campground at Wilson Island is remaining open during the new water system installaiton.

A project between the DNR, Hartman Reserve Nature Center and Black Hawk County Conservation Board with support from Waterloo Parks, Cedar Falls Parks, and the Cedar trails Partnership created the Cedar Valley Paddlers Trail. The new water trail connects the four lakes in George Wyth State Park, with the Cedar River and the two lakes at Hartman Reserve Nature Center. The trail includes portages between the lakes and river so people could kayak or canoe the lakes/river and start and finish in the same location.

The water trail is completed and a formal grand opening is set for 10:30 a.m. on June 6, where the trail begins at Fisher Lake boat ramp.

CAMPGROUNDS EXPECTED TO BE BUSY

Memorial Day is the first heavy use weekend of the camping season, often being the first outing for many campers. To make the long weekend a good one, campers should check their equipment ahead of time to make sure everything is in working order and that they have all the gear they need to enjoy the weekend.

Campers are encouraged to brush up on the rules of the campground.

“We know the campgrounds are going to be busy and we will be encouraging campers to be courteous to each other and be good neighbors,” said Kevin Szcodronski, chief of the Iowa State Parks bureau. “Camping is a great way to spend quality time with friends and family.”

Something that can dampen the campground fun is swatting mosquitoes and early indications are there is a banner crop of this pest. Campers are advised to pack extra bug spray. It would also be a good idea to bring fishing equipment, as many parks are experiencing excellent fishing for bluegills, crappies and largemouth bass.

“Our parks are in good shape and offer a number of fun experiences from our trail system to interpretive programs,” Szcodronski said. Check at the campground kiosk to see what programs will be offered.

For more information, contact Szcodronski at 515-281-8674.

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HEAVY BOAT TRAFFIC EXPECTED FOR MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

DES MOINES – The boating season will hit full stride this weekend with thousands of crafts taking to the water, many for the first voyage of the year. For boaters planning to hit the water on the long Memorial Day Weekend, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources is encouraging them to inspect the safety equipment, including boat trailer and wheel bearings before leaving the driveway.

Boaters are reminded that all boat registrations expired on April 30. If the registration has not been renewed, boat owners should go to the county recorder's office in the county where the boat owner resides to get the registration current, before hitting the water.

“The staging area on the boat ramp is no place to find out that you left the boat drain plug and life jackets in the garage,” said Susan Hager, boating safety coordinator for the DNR. “Check the trailer lights, make sure the fire extinguisher is properly charged and the life jackets are in proper working order and sized for each person on board.”

The DNR and Department of Public Safety are hosting a boating basics safety checkpoint on May 23, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the upper Cherry Glen boat ramp on Saylorville Lake. The boating safety check happens during National Safe Boating Week, which is promoting wearing a life jacket while on the water.

“The weather forecast for the holiday weekend is mostly favorable for boating so I would expect heavy boat traffic and if that is the case, boaters need to exercise patience on the ramps and on the water,” Hager said. “One of the main issues we find on the water is boaters going too fast for the conditions, and that puts not only those on board in danger, but other boats on the water as well.”

Hager recommends boat operators practice defensive boating techniques and to avoid alcohol.

“Boat operators should keep their hand on the throttle and off the bottle. Our primary goal is safety and having a sober operator can go a long way toward that end,” she said.

The Iowa DNR and other law enforcement agencies will have water safety patrols out for the busy Memorial Day Weekend.

For more information, contact Hager at 515-281-0122.

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ANGLERS TRASHING SHORELINE IS MAJOR PROBLEM

DES MOINES – Littering is not only an eyesore, it shows a lack of respect someone demonstrates by leaving their trash behind for others to clean up. And there may be no worst group of litterbugs than those among the fishing community.

“Anglers are the worst of the worst of the outdoor groups for cleaning up after ourselves,” said Marion Conover, chief of fisheries for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “I can only guess that those who purposefully leave their trash behind are lazy, disrespectful lawbreakers and I’m sorry to call them anglers.”

A number of groups and conservation organizations spend countless hours volunteering their time to clean the shorelines of the empty bait containers, old fishing line, pop and beer cans, chips and candy wrappers and so on.

“Just about anything you can carry with you fishing, we’ve probably cleaned it up,” Conover said. “It is very frustrating from my perspective because it seems our constituency is infected with more than our fair share of litterbugs and that is unfortunate. We are using a lot of energy and resources to get people fishing and when they come out to a lake they see all this trash on shore. That’s pretty disappointing.”

Anglers should tuck a few plastic grocery sacks in their tackle bag and use it for trash.

“When you’re done fishing, carry the sack out with you. Pretty simple,” Conover said. “It’s our resource and we need to do a better job keeping it clean.”

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BOAT SLIPS AT STORM LAKE MARINA ARE READY FOR 2007 SEASON

STORM LAKE – The new Storm Lake marina will open for business on May 23 and has assigned 27 of the 84 slips available for the 2007 season. The remaining slips are available on a first come, first serve basis.

Slips are available to rent for the entire season for \$200. Anyone interested in renting a slip should contact Sandy Sampson at 515-281-8004 or by email at sandra.sampson@dnr.state.ia.us.

Construction on the marina will be ongoing through the end of June, as contractors install the new electrical outlets, sidewalk, roadways and parking area along the marina in front of the dock slips. Permanent power will not be available until that time. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will provide portable power in the interim.

When completed, there will be 84 fixed dock slips, each having a dedicated 20 amp electrical outlet for hoist power. The electrical outlets provided are not to be used as shore power and are not designed as such. Eight slips will be handicapped accessible with wider docks and catwalks. Dock slip installation is complete. Hoists may be installed at anytime.

Water depth in the marina will vary between six and eight feet under normal conditions and can now be measured at the assigned slip. Some adjustment of the hoist legs may be necessary depending on where the slip is located. The lake was 12 inches above normal on May 7.

Staff with the DNR will operate the marina in 2007, then hire a contractor to handle the operations for 2008 and beyond. The marina office will be open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, offering gas, ice and some snacks for purchase. Call the marina directly at 712-732-8133.

Boat hoists currently being stored on the marina property will need to be relocated to the lake waters, removed or relocated across the road by May 25, to make the parking lot useable for Memorial Day Weekend. Hoists currently stored on the land leased by the DNR across from the marina can remain in their present location through May 2008.

For more information, contact Angela Corio at 515-281-4579.

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[Electronic photo available]

For 85-year-old Turkey Hunting Enthusiast ----

SPRING SEASON ENDS WITH CLASSIC ADVENTURE

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

GARNAVILLO---The final segment of this year's spring turkey season has come to an end. For the 55,000 Iowans who pursue this elusive species, it will be a long, long wait until the spring gobbling begins again next year.

For those of you who don't hunt wild turkeys ---- Well, you just don't know what you're missing. Anyone who samples the sport quickly realizes that there's a whole lot more to the game than just bagging your bird.

Turkey hunting is mostly about clear crisp mornings, spectacular sunrises, and the smell of damp earth. It is also woodsmanship. The art of moving softly and blending into your surroundings so completely, that you almost become a part of the timbers you stalk.

Turkey hunting is also about sound --- the soft rustle of new foliage and the songs of a million birds returning from the south. But the bird sound hunters crave most, of course, is the ancient staccato rattle of the wild gobbler. Blood stirring and primitive, it is a sound like no other.

The sound of gobbling can become so addictive that, even after they've bagged their turkey, many hunters continue to rise at three or four a.m. just to hear the noise one more time.

The longer I spend at it the more I realize that, perhaps as much as anything, turkey hunting is also about people. Our party has hunted on some of the same farms for more than a quarter century now. You get to know a landowner pretty well in that amount of time. I can name more than a couple of farmsteads where sitting down to the kitchen table really does feel just like home.

We've become a mobile society, and people seem to get pretty scattered out these days. For a lot of folks, myself included, the spring turkey season is as good of an excuse as any for friends and family to come together.

My old friend Ed Kotz of Grinnell is a good example of what I'm talking about. A gobbler enthusiast to the core, Ed turns 85 this fall. He's the oldest active turkey hunter I know. Whenever he shows up for a hunt, one thing is certain. Something amazing is about to happen. This spring was no exception.

When Ed caught up to the gang this year we were hunting in the bluff country of northeast Iowa's Clayton County. The final segment of the spring season was already underway and the clock was ticking. As always, Kotz was eager to hit the woods.

The weather was less than ideal. Just before dawn, the breeze picked up and a steady rain began to pelt the woodlands. Within a half-hour of entering the forest, I was soaked to the bone. Predictably, there was not so much as a single gobble.

Two miles and three ridges over, Ed was using his head. He stayed warm and dry while the rain played a lullaby on the roof of his car.

Another hour passed and the rain abruptly ceased. Forest creatures began to stir, and the turkeys immediately started to gobble. Although Kotz attempted to work three different birds during the next two hours, the crafty toms refused to respond.

Deciding to call a temporary halt, Kotz cautiously stood to survey his

surroundings. Much to his chagrin, he immediately spotted a monster tom trotting in his direction. Slowly bending his knees, Ed managed to return to his seat without spooking the incoming turkey.

Continuing on course, the gobbler passed without presenting a sure shot. Seizing the paddle of his wooden box call, Kotz scratched out an enticing series of yelps. Liking what he heard, the tom turned on his heel and began a beeline to Ed's position.

Arriving at the hunter's location, the gobbler stopped and suddenly broke into strut. It was the bird's final act.

The hunting party had reassembled and was attempting to dry off when the cell phone vibrated in my pocket. It was Kotz.

"Hello. This is Old Edward," he announced.

"Since it stopped raining, turkeys have been gobbling all over the place up here. One just came strutting in a minute ago and I got him. I think he's probably a 25-pounder," he added.

We lost no time in driving to the woods. Kotz was nearly to the road when we arrived. His gobbler was indeed a sight to behold. With a massive body, 11-inch beard, and inch-plus spurs the tom was a work of art.

In spite of the lousy weather and educated birds, Kotz had managed to score a classic hunt. Like I said, whenever he's around something amazing is bound to happen.

Following a rousing session of congratulatory back slaps and excited chatter, Ed suddenly suggested we celebrate by heading into town for breakfast. When hunting turkeys in Clayton County, going to town for breakfast can only mean one thing ---- a trip to Thoma's Dairy Bar.

Located on Garnavillo's main drag, Thoma's is one of the best places I know to find out where the bucks are runnin', the trout jumpin', the morels poppin', or the turkeys gobblin'. The cafe also has food, and it's as good as you'll find anywhere in Iowa. When it comes to great home cookin', this place is the real deal. Proprietor Rory Thoma proved the point by delivering steaming platters of blueberry pancakes, eggs, and ham.

Breakfast also became story time, as we relived some of our more memorable bluff country hunts. As we prepared to leave, Ed announced that he was springing for breakfast. Like I said, whenever he shows up something amazing is sure to happen.

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of May 22, 2007

www.iowadnr.gov

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 18: The river is at 7.46 feet at the Muscatine gauge and all pools are at normal late spring levels. Water temperature at Muscatine is 69 degrees.

White bass fishing has been good below the dams. Smallmouth bass fishing has been good up **Sylvan Slough**. Walleye and sauger fishing is improving with better water clarity....try worms or leeches or crankbaits trolled on wing dams. Catfish fishing is improving using worms or minnows below a bobber along the rocks.

Lake Darling (Washington): Cold weather early last week seems to have put an end to the crappie spawn with very few fish coming back in later in the week. Anglers were catching some nice batches of catfish later in the week on shrimp and chicken liver.

Lake Geode (Henry): Crappies are done. Anglers are catching bluegills along the edge of the weed beds in 5 to 6 feet of water.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Fishing has slowed but anglers are still seeing the bluegills in shallow. Look for some warmer weather this week to get them started feeding again.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappies are being caught in shallow water areas on jigs or jig and minnow combinations. Walleyes are biting on night crawlers being trolled or drifted around rocky points and underwater islands. Channel catfish have been biting on worms, minnows and leeches.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Bluegills and crappies have been hitting on small jigs fished in 6 to 10 feet of water. Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial lures

Lake Wapello (Davis): Bluegills have been biting on small jigs tipped with a night crawler fished under a bobber. Largemouth bass have been hitting on artificial lures such as crankbaits and spinner baits. Channel catfish have been biting on liver and worms.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Channel catfish have been biting on liver and night crawlers. Crappies have moved to deeper water and are hitting on small jigs.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): Crappie fishing has been a little slower this week; some fish are extremely shallow while others are off the bank on structure. Try small jigs or minnows for best results. Some walleyes are also being caught trolling crankbaits or live bait rigs over rocks.

Kent Lake (Johnson): Bluegills are being caught around the shallow brush on small worms or jigs.

Pleasant Creek (Linn): Largemouth bass are biting on about anything. Try crankbaits, plastic worms or live bait for best results. Bluegills are spawning now and can be caught on small worms or jigs tipped with wax worms.

Union Grove (Tama): Bluegills and crappies are being caught from shallow brush on live bait and small jigs. Channel catfish are also being picked up towards evening on night crawlers.

Skunk River (Washington and Henry): The river at Brighton has finally gone back into its banks. Anglers are picking up a few catfish on live bait.

Cedar River (Linn): Anglers are catching white bass, flathead catfish, channel catfish and a few bonus walleyes below the dams. Minnows are catching most of the white bass, while night crawlers have been the best bait for flatheads, and cut shad or night crawlers for the channel catfish. The walleyes are being caught mostly on crawlers, but minnows will work as well.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Water levels on the Mississippi River continue to fall and clarity remains very good. On Monday, river stage was 8.2 feet at Lansing, 14.2 feet at Lynxville, 6.09 feet at Guttenberg, 8.5 feet in Dubuque, and Bellevue was at 6.4 feet and falling. The water temperature has fallen due to the cool nights and on Monday was near 65 degrees in Guttenberg, and 67 degrees in Bellevue. Several species of fish have been biting recently and fishing pressure remains somewhat light. Some good areas to catch a variety of fish include the major side sloughs such as Minnesota Slough near New Albin or Big Slough near Lansing (**Pool 9**). In **Pool 10**, try Harpers Slough near Harpers Ferry or the East Channel between Marquette and Prairie du Chien, Wis. In **Pool 11**, try Cassville Slough, near Guttenberg, and Hurricane Slough, north of Dubuque, for a variety of game fish.

Bluegill fishing is really good right now in the tailwaters and backwater areas of **Pools 9 to 15**. Good numbers of bluegills are being caught in the pockets below the locks and dams. Small jigs or even a plain hook tipped with a worm will work. On the Wisconsin side of the river, good backwater areas to try are the Black Hawk Bottoms (**Pool 9**), Bagley's/Jay's Lake (**Pool 10**) and the Bertom Lake complex (**Pool 11**). On the Iowa side, try Minnesota Slough near New Albin (**Pool 9**), Harper's Slough/Mudhen Lake near Harpers Ferry (**Pool 10**) and Swift Slough/Big Pond near Guttenberg (**Pool 11**). Further downstream, nice bluegills are being caught next to the boat ramp in downtown Bellevue (**Pool 13**). In the backwater areas, fish around snags and along the rip rapped shorelines.

Yellow perch are being caught in the tailwaters and backwater areas of **Lock and Dams 9 and 10**. Small jigs or even a plain hook and worm will work. Fish the same locations in **Pools 9 to 11** as for bluegill. Some yellow perch up to 14 inches are being reported in these areas.

Nice-sized white bass are being caught in the tailwaters of both **Lock and Dams 9 and 10**. Most of these fish are being taken on small spinners and jigs. As the water levels continue to recede, expect to find more white bass working the wing dams. White bass are also biting in **Pools 12 to 14**. Although, the bite has slowed somewhat in **Pool 13**, anglers have been hammering white bass in **Pool 14** using shad and other silver, minnow-imitating crankbaits or white twister tails and jigs.

Rock bass are on the bite in the Lansing area (**Pool 9**) near beaver dams and tree snags. Small minnow-imitation jigs tipped with a night crawler seem to work best.

In stronger current areas such as wing dams, catfish and walleyes are biting in **Pools 9 to 11**. Concentrate fishing on the front sides (upstream side) of the wing dam. For folks who have not fished the Mississippi River before, wing dams are rocks piled up perpendicular to the main channel and are used to divert water to the navigational channel. They generally start on shore and end near buoys in the main river channel. They can be a dangerous boating hazard. If you are not familiar with river navigation, talk to local bait shops or DNR officials for tips on navigating around these dams. The best fishing areas are generally upstream of wing dams where fish do the most feeding. Walleye and sauger fishing is fair in **Pools 12 to 15** above the wing dams, probably due to the numerous cold fronts moving through the area last week. Leeches on a three-way rig with spinners or floaters seem to have been working better than crawlers lately.

Fishing for freshwater drum is good in all locations in **Pools 9 to 15** using a simple sliding sinker and a night crawler. Drum are found mostly in current situations and you do not need a boat to catch them. Try fishing at any river access area or boat launch situated in current.

Smallmouth and largemouth bass fishing continues to be good on a variety of lures including small spinners, crankbaits, jigs, and soft plastics. The key is to find and fish the habitat and structure. Areas to try include the tailwater areas at Lynxville, Wis., Guttenberg, Dubuque, and Bellevue and fish along rip rap and rocky shorelines (**Pools 9 to 15**).

Cedar River (Mitchell, Floyd and Chickasaw): Walleye and smallmouth bass fishing has slowed. Black crappies are biting on minnows fished under a bobber.

Cedar River (Bremer and Black Hawk): Walleye fishing is good on jigs tipped with half a night crawler fished in the deeper pools and current breaks.

Maquoketa River (Delaware): Channel catfish are hitting night crawlers or dead baits fished on the bottom. Walleye fishing is good on jigs tipped with a night crawler or crankbaits. Smallmouth bass are hitting crankbaits or jigs tipped with a night crawler or twister tail.

Shell Rock River (Butler and Bremer): Walleye are biting on jigs tipped with a night crawler. Channel catfish are good below dams and the mouths of creeks. Fish on the bottom using night crawlers or dead cut baits. Some anglers are catching catfish on jigs and twister tails.

Turkey River (Clayton): Smallmouth bass fishing is good on night crawlers, plastics and crankbaits. Walleye fishing is good on twister tails or minnows. A few rock bass and suckers are also being caught.

Upper Iowa River (Winneshiek and Allamakee): Fishing for smallmouth bass is good floating twister tails in a variety of colors and live bait.

Yellow River (Allamakee): Smallmouth bass fishing is good on dark colored jigs from the Ion Bridge to the mouth. Brown trout fishing is also good.

Black Hawk County Lakes and Ponds: The water temperature has risen and crappie and bluegill fishing is good. Fish for crappies using minnows and/or jigs next to structure. Bluegills are hitting on a piece of night crawler suspended under a bobber near shore. Some anglers are catching largemouth bass using crankbaits.

Casey Lake in Hickory Hills Park (Tama): Fishing is good for bluegills off the jetties using wax worms or a piece of night crawler suspended under a bobber. Also, try artificial flies on fly rods for bluegills feeding at the surface.

Lake Delhi (Delaware): Channel catfish are good using dead baits or night crawlers fished on the bottom. Bluegill and crappie fishing has improved around boat docks and structure. Use a small piece of a night crawler or small jigs for bluegills. Fish a jig tipped with a minnow or a plain minnow under a slip bobber for hungry crappies.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Crappies are biting on minnows and artificial lures. Largemouth bass are beginning to hit on artificial baits. Bluegill fishing is good on tube jigs and worms.

Lake Meyer (Winnebago): Crappie fishing continues to be excellent next to structure using white and black tube jigs; however, many fish are small. Fishing is also very good for smaller bluegills on angle worms and crappie jigs. Largemouth bass are biting on night crawlers fished on the bottom.

Silver Lake (Delaware): Fishing for bluegill and catfish is fair in Silver Lake located in the town of Delhi. For bluegills, try using a piece of night crawler or a wax worm fished under a bobber. Channel catfish are hitting night crawlers or dead cut baits fished on the bottom.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Largemouth bass are hitting twister tails fished in the early morning and late evening hours. Bluegill and crappie fishing is fair; however, many are small.

Trout fishing is very good and water conditions are excellent. Iowa DNR personnel continue to work on stream access improvements and habitat improvements in the trout streams. If you have not checked out the new access for the Turkey River at the Big Spring Hatchery, it is well worth the trip. This area was previously difficult to fish due to the steep dike and density of the trees in the area; however, recent access projects have made this location an easily accessible place to fish and enjoy the Turkey River. The Jensen Trail downstream from Echo Valley Park to Otter Creek offers anglers a scenic hiking trail through a truly beautiful area of the state. If you are looking for a place to stretch your legs and toss in a line, check out these trout fishing streams as well as many other out-of-the-way streams during the Memorial Day weekend. Many trout stream stockings are announced and the dates of proposed stockings can be found on the Iowa DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov or by calling the trout stocking hotline at 563-927-5736.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

NORTHWEST

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing has been fair drifting leeches in Anglers Bay. The evening bite has been best with some good reports coming from dock and wader anglers. Most fish are 14 to 17 inches. Largemouth bass fishing is good throwing spinner baits in Anglers Bay. Fish are also being caught at Buffalo Run using a variety of baits. Bullheads fishing is fair on the grade using night crawlers. Crappie fishing is good along the bulrushes in Anglers Bay. Small minnows under a bobber or small tube jigs have been effective. Fish up to 13 inches have been creel.

West Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is good. Anglers have been working rock piles in Emerson, Millers and the North Bay using leeches. In the evening anglers have been trolling crankbaits. Bluegill fishing is good around main lake docks. Try using small hair jigs tipped with wax worms or garden worms. Largemouth bass fishing is excellent in the canals and shallow rock piles using soft plastics.

East Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is fair in the evening below the spillway. Anglers are catching white bass below the spillway casting jigs tipped with shiners or minnows. Bluegill fishing is good along the Trestle. Crappie fishing is fair around wooden docks and submerged brush

Silver Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is fair using leeches on snells during the day and working leeches under a bobber at night.

Center Lake (Dickinson): Bluegill fishing is excellent along the west shore. Bullhead fishing is excellent using night crawlers.

Five Island Lake (Palo Alto): Walleye fishing is fair in the evenings fishing from shore.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing is excellent. Trolling crankbaits in a variety of depths or drifting live bait in deeper water are the best techniques. Remember Clear Lake has a 14-inch minimum length for walleye. Yellow bass fishing is fair. Some yellows are being caught in deeper water with live bait. White bass are being caught trolling crankbaits while walleye fishing. Channel catfish fishing is fair in the west end of the lake on dead chubs or liver.

Beeds Lake (Franklin): Fishing is good for 8 to 11-inch crappies using small jigs and minnows.

Briggs Woods (Hamilton): Channel catfish are hitting on the diversion dike using chicken liver. Bluegills are hitting small pieces of night crawler or jigs near shore and along the dam.

Upper and Lower Pine Lake (Hardin): Crappie fishing is good using minnows and small jigs around the downed trees and rocky shoreline areas.

Smith Lake (Kossuth): Largemouth bass fishing is excellent. Spinner baits and jerk baits are working the best. Remember Smith Lake has an 18-inch minimum length on bass. Channel catfish are hitting chicken liver and dead chubs.

Lake Catherine (Winnebago): Bluegill fishing has been good using small jigs or night crawlers. Largemouth bass fishing is good using spinner baits and rubber worms.

Rice Lake (Winnebago and Worth): Bullhead fishing is excellent using night crawlers. Fish the windy shoreline for the best action.

Lake Cornelia (Wright): Bullhead fishing is excellent using night crawlers. Bullhead size has been running 9 to 11 inches.

Morse Lake (Wright): Bullheads are biting on night crawlers.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): Channel catfish (2 to 3 pounds) fishing is good using almost any bait. Fishing is fair for bullheads using night crawlers. Walleye fishing is fair.

North Twin Lake (Calhoun): Anglers are catching a few big bullheads. Fishing is good for big bluegills; use small brightly colored leadheads, especially chartreuse. Fishing is also good for big yellow bass; use same rig as for bluegills. Crappie fishing is fair for crappie. Fishing is good for catfish.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Channel catfish fishing is fair using various baits. Anglers are catching a few white bass by casting into shad schools. A few walleye are still being caught.

Yellow Smoke Lake (Crawford): Fishing is fair for big bluegills. Fishing is good for 2 to 3 pound catfish on chicken liver. A few white bass, up to 18 inches, have been caught drifting with leadheads and small crankbaits.

Crawford Creek (Ida): Fishing is good for 7 to 8-inch bluegill in deeper water and off the face of dam.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Some nice walleye have been caught along the shoreline in the evenings using a slip bobber and leech. Some crappies have been hitting minnows and small tube jigs. A few nice catfish have been caught along the shoreline and the face of the dam near the spillway.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Southwest

Farm Ponds: Bluegill, largemouth bass, channel catfish, and crappie are biting well.

Icaria (Adams): Several mid-sized walleyes are being caught on jigs. Several largemouth bass up to 16 inches can be caught near shoreline structure. Crappie fishing is good with several 7 to 9-inch fish being caught near shoreline structure. Some 7 to 8-inch bluegill can be caught near shore on night crawlers. The lake is full and running over. Water clarity is approximately 2 ½ feet at the dam.

Little River (Decatur): Crappies are biting better than earlier and can be caught just off shore on jigs or minnows during mid day, and near shore at dusk and dawn. Anglers have been catching some bluegill better than last week. Water clarity is approximately 2 to 3 feet at the dam.

Wilson (Taylor): Bluegill fishing is excellent using jigs or night crawlers.

Windmill (Taylor): Bluegills and some crappies are being caught using jigs or night crawlers while fishing near the dam. Some channel catfish have been caught on liver.

Green Valley (Union): Some crappies are biting near shore in the evenings or just off shore during the day on minnows. Fishing is good for channel catfish on night crawlers, stink bait and liver off silt dikes or in shallow bays. Bluegills are biting on night crawlers or wax worms. Several nice sized largemouth bass have been caught near shore on spinners. Water clarity is approximately 3 feet at the dam.

Three Mile (Union): Several small wipers have been caught using minnows in deep water near points. Several crappies have been caught near structure. Some nice bluegills are being caught on night crawlers or wax worms. Water clarity is about 4 feet at the dam.

Twelve Mile (Union): Walleyes are being caught, but most are 12 inches. Anglers are picking up largemouth bass up to 17 inches, with most between 11 and 13 inches. The lake is full and running over. Water clarity is about 4 feet at the dam.

Badger Creek (Madison): Some channel catfish can be caught in the warm shallow water. Bluegill and crappie are still biting well near the rocks of the jetties and in areas near shoreline access.

Criss Cove (Madison): Some bluegills are biting on the coves.

Three Fires (Taylor): Crappie fishing is good. Largemouth bass are easily caught and most are between 10 and 15 inches. Several 7 to 8-inch bluegills are being caught. The lake is full and easily usable. The water has about 2 feet of clarity but the fish are still being caught.

Grade Lake (Clarke): Anglers are catching some nice crappie near shore at dusk and dawn and in 5 to 7 feet of water during the day.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Crappies are biting well near shore at dusk and dawn. Some bluegills are being caught on night crawlers. Channel catfish are biting on stink baits.

Walnut Creek Marsh (Ringgold): The bluegills and crappies are biting well near shore.

West Osceola (Clarke): Largemouth bass fishing is good near shore and around the trees. Many small crappies can be caught from the dam or near shoreline areas with trees. Some mid-sized bluegill can be caught on night crawlers.

Contact: Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes.

Big Creek (Polk): Fishing is good for 6 to 9-inch crappies throughout the lake. Try white jigs or jigs tipped with minnows and cast just beyond the weed edge. This is a great location to take kids fishing right now.

Hickory Grove (Story): Crappie fishing is good; anglers are catching some larger fish by the culverts. Bass fishing has also been decent and some big bluegills are also being caught.

Easter Lake (Polk): Crappies are biting off of the point by the boat ramp.

Saylorville (Polk): Fishing below the dam has been good. White bass are biting on crankbaits. The wiper fishing has also been good with fish up to 10 pounds. Some catfish, walleye and crappie are being picked up as well.

Red Rock and Robert's Creek (Marion): Crappies were beginning to bite before the last rain. Some white bass are being caught below the dam.

Don Williams (Boone): Crappie fishing is good. Anglers are using white jigs, tipped with minnows in the brush piles, 4 to 5 feet deep. A few catfish are also being caught on night crawlers and stink bait.

Contact: Ben Dodd (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes

Orient (Adair): Fishing is good for channel catfish with average size 20 inches. Bullheads are being picked up in the silt ponds. Bluegills are moving into shore and can be caught on small jigs. Largemouth bass is good using a slow retrieve and plastic worms.

Nodaway (Adair): Bluegill fishing is good using small jigs tipped with night crawlers. Crappies are moving away from shore but a few are being caught along the dam. Channel catfish fishing is fair using liver.

Greenfield (Adair): Bluegill fishing is good with fish moving into shore to spawn. Largemouth bass are being caught using plastic baits and spinner baits.

Mormon Trail (Adair): Bluegills are moving into shore to spawn on south side of lake in pea gravel. Channel catfish fishing is fair using liver around jetties and in the shallow bays.

Littlefield (Audubon): Crappie fishing has slowed, but a few are being caught drifting a jig and minnow. Bluegills are fair casting a small jig tipped with night crawlers. Channel catfish has been good in shallow bays and corners of the dam using stink bait.

Anita (Cass): Anglers are catching 7 to 8-inch bluegill using jigs from shore. Channel catfish, 2 to 6 pound size, are being caught on night crawlers and liver. Largemouth bass fishing has been good for fish up to 18 inches. Crankbaits and jigs have been used around brush piles.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): A few walleyes have been caught drifting night crawlers around sunken trees. Crappie fishing is slow.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Fishing for crappies is fair in the canals using minnows with bobber or small jigs. A few wipers are also being caught. Channel catfish is good drifting cut bait.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Fishing is slow for 7 to 8-inch crappies, which have moved away from shore. Channel catfish fishing is good using dead minnows in shallow bays. A few largemouth bass are being caught using a slow presentation. Water is still turbid after the rain last week.

Farm Ponds: Farm ponds are good for largemouth bass, bluegills and channel catfish. Be sure to ask permission from the landowner first, however.

Contact: Bryan Hayes (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

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